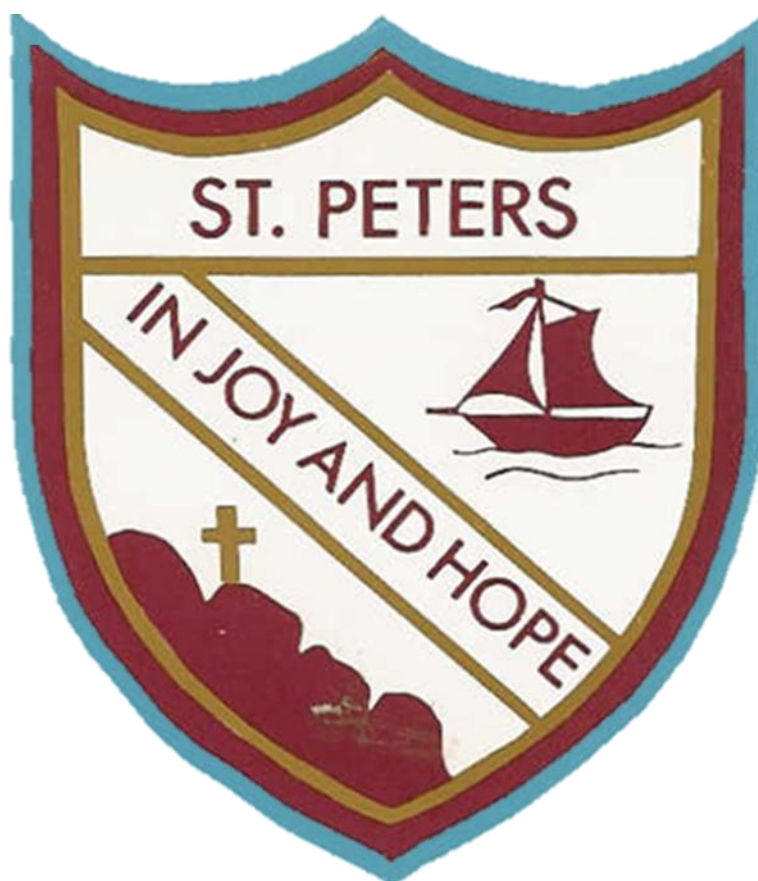


St Peter's Catholic School



Attendance Policy

Date Approved by Governors _____

Chair of Governors _____

Introduction

At St Peters Catholic Primary School we recognise the importance of good attendance and expect all children on roll to attend every day as long as they are well enough to do so. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from education it is essential that they attend school regularly and punctually. They should only be absent from school when it is absolutely necessary. Children are only expected to attend school for 190 days each academic year.

We believe that children will attend school regularly if it is a happy and secure place and we work hard to create an environment where every child is valued.

School absence will disrupt a child's learning and may affect their academic progress. It may also disrupt their friendships and impact on their social and emotional development. Children may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly.

School attendance is given a high profile throughout the school because we know how important it is. It is discussed at school assemblies, parents' evenings, staff meetings and governors' meetings. It is also included in school reports and newsletters. We also provide visual displays highlighting the importance of good attendance and punctuality in prominent positions within the school.

Once enrolled at a school parents have a legal responsibility as outlined in The Education Act 1996 to ensure that their child attends regularly and on every school day unless the child is ill.

Expectations

Pupils

They will attend school regularly.

They will arrive on time, appropriately dressed and prepared for the day.

They will discuss with their parents or class teacher any issues which are affecting their attendance.

Parents

They will encourage their child to attend school.

They will contact the school office on the first morning that their child is unable to attend and also send in a note to the teacher on their child's return.

They will ensure their child is appropriately dressed taking account of the school's uniform policy and is well prepared for the day.

School

Will provide a safe learning environment.

Will provide a sympathetic response to any child's or parent's concerns.

Will keep regular and accurate records of attendance and punctuality.

Will contact parents when a child fails to attend and where no message has been received to explain the absence. Any unexplained absences will be followed up.

Will encourage good attendance and punctuality through a system of rewards.

Will refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to the Education Social Welfare Service

Registration Procedures

The school register is a legal document and therefore the marking of the register is important and needs to be accurate.

The school day begins at 9am and registers will be taken at this time. Any child not in the classroom at this time will be marked as absent. Any child arriving after this time will need to be signed in at the school office and will be marked as late using an L in the register. The registers will close at 9.15 am and any child arriving after this time will be marked as an unauthorised absence using a U in the register.

If a child is absent

When a child is absent unexpectedly, the class teacher will record their absence on the register.

It is important that parents and carers inform the school of absence as soon as possible.

If school has not been informed of the reason for absence by the time the register closes the school office will contact the parent to find out why. This may also mean that more than one of the contact numbers school hold for the child will be contacted. Good practice would be for schools to have at least 3 contact numbers for each child.

Parents are also asked to send a note in to explain the absence when the child returns to school.

If your child is sick and the sickness continues for more than a few days we would expect you to consult your doctor.

If your child's attendance falls below 90%, which is the rate at below which the Department for Education class a child as being persistently absent from school, you may be invited in to a School Attendance Panel meeting or your child's attendance may be referred to the Education Social Welfare Service.

Failure by a parent to attend School Attendance Panel Meetings or cooperate with the Education Social Welfare Service can lead to a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued or a parent being prosecuted in the magistrates' courts.

If a child is absent from school for a continuous period of four weeks and no contact is made with school then the child may be referred to the Education Social Welfare Service as a Child Missing Education.

Lateness

Punctuality is crucial. Lateness in to school causes disruption to the child's learning and also to that of other pupils in the class.

Children need to be in school on time at 9.00am each day when the registration period begins. It's important that all children make a good start to the day and are ready to learn. If a child arrives after 9.00am but before 9.15am [when registers close] they will be given a late mark [L]. Children who arrive late are often embarrassed and may not be in the best frame of mind to begin learning. They may miss out on something important. If children arrive after 9.15am [when registers close] they will be marked with a U which equates to an unauthorised absence.

Leave of absence in term time

Parents are discouraged from withdrawing their children from school in term time for family holidays because this may impact on their progress. Head Teachers may only authorise holidays in term time in exceptional circumstances. Parents who believe their circumstances are exceptional are asked to complete an Application for Leave of Absence form. This form should be returned to the school well in advance of the proposed leave and before committing to any expense. Parents who withdraw their child for unauthorised holidays in term time may be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice and fine.

Exceptional Circumstances

Exceptional circumstances are rare, significant, unavoidable and short meaning an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time. For instance:

Where parents conditions of employment preclude them from taking holidays during school holiday time for example, serving members of the armed forces.

Cases involving a terminally ill child or family member.

Family members with a disability.

Holidays funded by charities.

Absences in relation to recognised religious festivals.

Monitoring Attendance

The attendance of all pupils will be monitored by the Attendance Officer and Head teacher. Where attendance falls below 96%, letters reminding parents about the importance of good attendance will be sent together with the child's own attendance percentage.

If a child's attendance becomes a cause for concern school will write to the parent.

If the attendance falls below 90% parents will be invited to attend a meeting with the Head teacher and Educational Social Worker. During this meeting an Action Plan will be agreed to try and improve your child's attendance.

Reward Systems

Our school has a system of rewards for children whose attendance is good or excellent or has improved significantly. These include individual certificates and medals, class rewards and trophies

Registration Codes

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual Registration)	Approved educational activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual Registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved educational activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved educational activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved educational activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved educational activity
W	Work experience	Approved educational activity
X	Non-compulsory school age absence	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

Application for Leave during Term Time

Parents/Carers must ask permission for their child to be absent during term time, and it is at the Head teacher's discretion to decide whether or not the absence will be authorised. The Head teacher may authorise leave during term time for *exceptional circumstances only*. If leave is taken without permission, or no application is made, parents/carers risk being issued with an Education Penalty Notice.

Parents/Carers wishing to apply for their child to have leave of absence from school should complete this form and return it to school for authorisation at least two weeks before the proposed leave.

PARENT'S/CARER'S SECTION					
Surname of child				First name	
Date of birth		Year		Class	
Full name of parent (1)					
Address of parent (1)					
Postcode				Telephone No.	
Full name of parent (2)				Telephone No.	
Address of parent (2)					
Do you consider this request to be due to exceptional circumstances? If so, please outline the reasons why					
Departure and return date					
Would your child miss any national tests or examinations?					Yes / No
Has she/he had leave during term-time in the last 12 months? (If so, please give dates, reasons, and number of school days leave)					Yes / No
Are there any other siblings? If yes please state their name and the school they attend					Yes / No
Parent/Carer signature				Date	
SCHOOL SECTION					
Holiday in Term Time	(i) approved _____ school days			(ii) not approved _____ school days	
Reasons					
Date discussed with parent/ carer and/or date informed of approval/ non-approval					
Head teacher's signature				Date	